

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-7 (canceled).

8. (new) A variable capacity storage unit comprising a plurality of independent conveyor means connected to operate as a single storage unit, each of said plurality of conveyor means comprising an endless conveyor arranged in a generally H-shaped pattern including a first elongated portion, a second elongated portion parallel to said first elongated portion, and a transverse portion movable along said first and second elongated portions dividing said generally H-shaped pattern into an active path on one side of said transverse portion and a passive path on the other side of the transverse portion, and transfer means for connecting said plurality of active portions to each other, whereby the storage capacity of said conveyor means can be varied by displacing at least one of said plurality of transverse portions to alter the proportion between said active path and said passive path in at least one of said plurality of independent conveyor means.

9. (new) The variable capacity storage unit of claim 8 wherein said transfer means comprises a curved conveyor extending from one of said plurality of first elongated portions to another of said plurality of second elongated portions located above said one of said plurality of first elongated portions.

10. (new) The variable capacity storage unit of claim 9 wherein at least a portion of said curved conveyor comprises an extension of one of said plurality of first elongated portions and said another of said plurality of second elongated portions.

11. (new) The variable capacity storage unit of claim 8 wherein each of said plurality of transverse portions is independently displaceable along said one of said first and second elongated portions associated therewith, whereby the

capacity of each of said plurality of conveyor means is independently controllable.

12. (new) A variable storage arrangement comprising a first variable capacity storage unit comprising a first plurality of independent conveyor means connected to operate as a single storage unit, each of said first plurality of independent conveyor means comprising an endless conveyor arranged in a generally H-shaped pattern including a first elongated portion, a second elongated portion parallel to said first elongated portion, and a first transverse portion movable along said first and second elongated portions dividing said generally H-shaped pattern into an active path on one side of said first transverse portion and a passive path on the other side of said first transverse portion, and first transfer means for connecting said plurality of active paths to each other, whereby the storage capacity of said first plurality of independent conveyor means can be varied by displacing at least one of said first transverse portions to alter the proportion between said active path and said passive path, and a second variable capacity storage unit comprising a second plurality of independent conveyor means connected to operate as a single storage unit, each of said second plurality of independent conveyor means comprising an endless conveyor arranged in a generally H-shaped pattern including a third elongated portion, a fourth elongated portion parallel to said third elongated portion, and a second transverse portion movable along said third and fourth elongated portions dividing said generally H-shaped pattern into an active path on one side of said second transverse portion and a passive path along the other side of said second transverse portion, and second transfer means for connecting said plurality of active paths to each other whereby the storage capacity of said second plurality of independent conveyor means can be varied by displacing at least one of said

second transverse portions to alter the proportion between said active paths and said passive paths, wherein said first variable capacity storage unit is adapted to transport goods between said first plurality of independent conveyor means in a first direction, and said second variable capacity storage unit is adapted to transport said goods between said second plurality of independent conveyor means in a second direction opposite to said first direction, said third and fourth elongated portions being positioned between said first and second elongated portions and said second transfer means being positioned between said first transfer means and said plurality of second transverse portions whereby said plurality of first independent conveyor means substantially circumvents said plurality of second independent conveyor means.

13. The variable capacity storage unit of claim 12 wherein said generally H-shaped patterns of said first variable capacity storage unit are vertically displaced from said generally H-shaped patterns of said second variable capacity storage unit.